

That which is claimed is:

1. A method of resetting a password for a network service account, the method comprising:
 - redirecting the user to a password reset tool, wherein the user is blocked from network access other than the password reset tool while being redirected;
 - after redirecting the user to the password reset tool, accepting user entry of verification information;
 - comparing the verification information from the user with known verification information for the user;
 - accepting user entry of a new password if the verification information accepted from the user matches the known verification information for the user; and
 - storing the new password as the known password for the user.
2. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
 - before redirecting the user to the password reset tool, accepting entry of a password; and
 - before redirecting the user to the password reset tool, comparing the entered password with a known password, wherein redirecting the user to the password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool if the entered password does not match the known password.
3. A method according to Claim 2 wherein accepting entry of a password comprises accepting entry of the password at a first server, and wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to a second server providing the password reset tool.
4. A method according to Claim 2 wherein accepting entry of a password comprises accepting entry of the password from a remote electronic device.
5. A method according to Claim 4 wherein accepting user entry of the password from a remote electronic device comprises accepting entry of the password from the remote electronic device over a telephone line.

6. A method according to Claim 2 further comprising:
providing network service for the user without redirecting to the password reset tool if the entered password matches the known password for the user.

7. A method according to Claim 2 wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined number of passwords have been accepted from the user during a session without matching the known password.

8. A method according to Claim 2 wherein accepting user entry of a password further comprises accepting user entry of a username and the password, and wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool if the password from the user does not match the known password further comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool only if the username entered by the user is a valid username.

9. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
terminating redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if the verification information entered by the user does not match the known verification information.

10. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
terminating redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if user verification information is accepted a predetermined number of times without matching the known verification information.

11. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
terminating redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined period of time passes without accepting user verification information matching the known verification information.

12. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
after accepting entry of the new password, terminating redirecting of the user to the password reset tool.

13. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
after accepting entry of the new password from a remote electronic device,
transmitting instructions for the remote electronic device to automatically save the
new password.

14. A method according to Claim 1 wherein redirecting the user to the
password reset tool comprises tunneling the user to the password reset tool.

15. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
after redirecting the user to the password reset tool, accepting a request for a
network browser; and
responsive to accepting the request for an network browser, providing a
password reset window including prompts for entry of the verification information.

16. A method according to Claim 1 further comprising:
after redirecting the user to the password reset tool, accepting a request for e-
mail service; and
responsive to accepting the request for e-mail service, providing a password
reset e-mail including a link to a password reset window including prompts for entry
of the verification information.

17. A method according to Claim 16 further comprising:
responsive to accepting the request for e-mail, blocking access to all e-mails
other than the password reset e-mail.

18. A method according to Claim 1 wherein the network service account
comprises an Internet service account.

19. A network service system that provides access to a data network for a user
having a network service account therewith, the system comprising:
a password reset tool configured to accept redirection of a user thereto,
wherein the user is blocked from network access other than the password reset tool
while being redirected, the password reset tool being further configured to accept user
entry of verification information after redirecting the user to the password tool, to

compare the verification information from the user with known verification information for the user, to accept user entry of a new password if the verification information accepted from the user matches the known verification information for the user, and to store the new password as the known password for the user.

20. A network service system according to Claim 19 further comprising:
an access control point configured to accept entry of a password from the user as a condition of providing access to the data network, to compare the entered password with a known password for the user, and to redirect the user to the password reset tool if the entered password does not match the known password.

21. A network service system according to Claim 20 wherein the access control point is implemented on a first server and the password reset tool is implemented on a second server.

22. A network service system according to Claim 20 wherein the access control point is configured to accept entry of the password from a remote electronic device.

23. A network service system according to Claim 22 wherein the access control point is configured to accept entry of the password from the remote electronic device over a telephone line.

24. A network service system according to Claim 20 wherein the access control point is configured to provide network service for the user without redirecting to the password reset tool if the entered password matches the known password for the user.

25. A network service system according to Claim 20 wherein the access control point is configured to redirect the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined number of passwords have been accepted from the user during a session without matching the known password.

26. A network service system according to Claim 20 wherein the access control point is configured to accept user entry of a username and the password, and to redirect the user to the password reset tool only if the username entered by the user is a valid username.

27. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to terminate redirection of the user to the password reset tool if the verification information entered by the user does not match the known verification information.

28. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to terminate redirection of the user to the password reset tool if user verification information is accepted a predetermined number of times without matching the known verification information.

29. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to terminate redirection of the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined period of time passes without accepting user verification information matching the known verification information.

30. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to terminate redirection of the user to the password reset tool after accepting entry of the new password.

31. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to transmit instructions for a remote electronic device to automatically save the new password after accepting entry of the new password from the remote electronic device,

32. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to accept tunneling of the user to the password reset tool.

33. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to accept a request for a network browser after accepting

redirection of the user, and to provide a password reset window including prompts for entry of the verification information responsive to accepting the request for an network browser.

34. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the password reset tool is configured to accept a request for e-mail service after redirecting the user to the password reset tool, and to provide a password reset e-mail including a link to a password reset window including prompts for entry of the verification information responsive to accepting the request for e-mail service.

35. A network service system according to Claim 34 wherein the password reset tool is configured to block access to all e-mails other than the password reset e-mail responsive to accepting the request for e-mail.

36. A network service system according to Claim 19 wherein the network service account comprises an Internet service account.

37. A computer program product configured to reset a password for a network service account, the computer program product comprising a computer useable storage medium having computer-readable program code embodied in the medium, the computer-readable program code comprising:

computer-readable program code that is configured to redirect the user to a password reset tool, and to block the user from network access other than the password reset tool while being redirected;

computer-readable program code that is configured to accept user entry of verification information after redirecting the user to the password reset tool;

computer-readable program code that is configured to compare the verification information from the user with known verification information for the user;

computer-readable program code that is configured to accept user entry of a new password if the verification information accepted from the user matches the known verification information for the user; and

computer-readable program code that is configured to store the new password as the known password for the user.

38. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to accept entry of a password
before redirecting the user to the password reset tool; and
computer-readable program code that is configured to compare the entered password with a known password before redirecting the user to the password reset tool, wherein redirecting the user to the password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool if the entered password does not match the known password.

39. A computer program product according to Claim 38 wherein accepting entry of a password comprises accepting entry of the password at a first server, and wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to a second server providing the password reset tool.

40. A computer program product according to Claim 38 wherein accepting entry of a password comprises accepting entry of the password from a remote electronic device.

41. A computer program product according to Claim 40 wherein accepting user entry of the password from a remote electronic device comprises accepting entry of the password from the remote electronic device over a telephone line.

42. A computer program product according to Claim 38 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to provide network service for the user without redirecting to the password reset tool if the entered password matches the known password for the user.

43. A computer program product according to Claim 38 wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined number of passwords have been accepted from the user during a session without matching the known password.

44. A computer program product according to Claim 38 wherein accepting user entry of a password further comprises accepting user entry of a username and the password, and wherein redirecting the user to a password reset tool if the password from the user does not match the known password further comprises redirecting the user to the password reset tool only if the username entered by the user is a valid username.

45. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to terminate redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if the verification information entered by the user does not match the known verification information.

46. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to terminate redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if user verification information is accepted a predetermined number of times without matching the known verification information.

47. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to terminate redirecting of the user to the password reset tool if a predetermined period of time passes without accepting user verification information matching the known verification information.

48. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to terminate redirecting of the user to the password reset tool after accepting entry of the new password.

49. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to transmit instructions for a remote electronic device to automatically save the new password after accepting entry of the new password from the remote electronic device.

50. A computer program product according to Claim 37 wherein redirecting the user to the password reset tool comprises tunneling the user to the password reset tool.

51. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to accept a request for a network browser after redirecting the user to the password reset tool; and
computer-readable program code that is configured to providing a password reset window including prompts for entry of the verification information responsive to accepting the request for a network browser.

52. A computer program product according to Claim 37 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to accept a request for e-mail service after redirecting the user to the password reset tool; and
computer-readable program code that is configured to provide a password reset e-mail including a link to a password reset window including prompts for entry of the verification information responsive to accepting the request for e-mail service.

53. A computer program product according to Claim 52 further comprising:
computer-readable program code that is configured to block access to all e-mails other than the password reset e-mail responsive to accepting the request for e-mail.

54. A computer program product according to Claim 37 wherein the network service account comprises an Internet service account.

55. A method of handling a past due balance for a network service account, the method comprising:

redirecting a user to a sandbox network, wherein the user is blocked from network access other than the sandbox network while being redirected;
after redirecting the user to the sandbox network, accepting user entry of verification information for payment of past due balance; and
after accepting user entry of the verification information, allowing network access outside the sandbox network for the user.

56. A method according to Claim 55 wherein accepting user entry of verification information comprises accepting credit card payment information.